



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

NEWS

ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH - GOVERNOR

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Blagojevich signs Attorney General Madigan bill strengthening parole restrictions for sex offenders

*New law imposes 15 additional conditions for sex offender parole,
including electronic monitoring for a minimum of 12 months*

SPRINGFIELD - Gov. Rod R. Blagojevich today signed legislation initiated by Attorney General Lisa Madigan that for the first time in the state's history establishes specific parole conditions for sex offenders released from prison.

"These strict measures, coupled with the Department of Corrections' aggressive new parolee-monitoring program, will prevent offenders from being in situations where they could pose a danger to our children or the community at large," Governor Blagojevich said. "I congratulate Attorney General Madigan, Representative Gordon and Senator Collins for their hard work on making sure we keep tight tabs on sex offenders once they are released from prison."

"We know that sex offenders are likely to re-offend. This new law will change and improve Illinois' current one-size-fits-all approach to parole and base the level of an offender's supervision on the level of risk he poses to potential victims," said Madigan, who held statewide hearings last fall on the subject of lifetime supervision for sex offenders. "Sex offenders know no boundaries. Sex offenders are not car thieves or burglars; they present a whole different set of challenges and dangers. We must be aggressive – and realistic – in our fight to protect women and children."

Under House Bill 6786, sponsored by Rep. Careen Gordon (D-Coal City) and Sen. Jacqueline Collins (D-Chicago), the Unified Code of Corrections would be amended to add 15 conditions of parole for sex offenders. The Prisoner Review Board has the discretion to impose any or all of the conditions on an individual sex offender.

- 1) Reside only at an Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) approved location.
- 2) Comply with all requirements of the Sex Offender Registration Act.

- 3) Notify third parties of possible risks associated with his or her criminal record.
- 4) Obtain approval from an IDOC agent prior to accepting employment or pursuing a course of study or vocational training, and notify IDOC prior to any change in employment, study, or training.
- 5) Not be employed or participate in any volunteer activity that involves contact with children, except under circumstances approved in advance and in writing by an agent of IDOC.
- 6) Be electronically monitored for a minimum of 12 months from the date of release.
- 7) Refrain from traveling outside the geographic area where he or she resides or works except upon terms approved in advance by an agent of IDOC. The terms may include consideration of the purpose of travel, the time of day, and others accompanying the person.
- 8) Refrain from having any contact, including written and oral communication, directly or indirectly, personally, by telephone, letter, or by third party with certain specified persons including, but not limited to, the victim or the victim's family without written approval by an agent of IDOC.
- 9) Refrain from all contact, directly or indirectly, personally, by telephone, letter, or through third party, with minor children without prior identification and approval of an agent of IDOC.
- 10) Neither possess or have under his or her control any material that is sexually oriented, sexually stimulating, or that shows male or female sex organs or any picture depicting children under 18 years of age nude or any written or audio material describing sexual intercourse or that depicts or alludes to sexual activity, including but not limited to visual, auditory, telephonic, or electronic media, or any matter obtained through access to any computer or material linked to computer access use.
- 11) Not patronize any business providing sexually stimulating or sexually oriented entertainment nor utilize "900" or adult phone numbers.
- 12) Not reside near, visit, or be in or near parks, schools, day care centers, swimming pools, beaches, theaters, or any other place where minor children congregate without advance approval of an agent of IDOC and immediately report any incidental contact with minor children to IDOC.
- 13) Not possess or have under his or her control certain specified items of contraband related to the sexual offense as determined by an agent of IDOC.
- 14) May be required to provide a written daily log of activities if directed by an agent of IDOC.
- 15) Comply with all other special conditions that IDOC may impose that restrict the person from high-risk situations and limit access to potential victims.

"I want to thank Governor Blagojevich and Attorney General Madigan who have supported this bill and our efforts to protect citizens from repeat sex-offenders," said Senator Jacqueline Y. Collins. "By allowing for the creation of sex offender-specific parole conditions, we will be helping parole agents more effectively monitor sex offenders after their release from prison and ultimately keeping our communities safer."

Illinois Department of Corrections Director Roger E. Walker Jr. heralded the new law as an important boost to the agency's effort to tighten its management and monitoring of sex offenders.

"We will ensure that all sex offenders under our supervision comply with the new registration laws," Walker said. "We have conducted an inventory of all sex offenders on parole to ensure that we're ready to fully enforce the new conditions."

Walker added that the Governor's Operation Spotlight parole reform initiative, which has increased monitoring and supervision of all 35,000 parolees in the Corrections system, helped the agency ramp-up its management of sex offenders.

"As part of Operation Spotlight, IDOC will assign parole agents with special training to provide more intensive supervision for sex offenders upon their release from prison," said Walker. "Their work will be enhanced by the addition of a new surveillance unit committed specifically to assisting the most high-risk cases."

The new law becomes effective January 1, 2005.